

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

1-38 (Canceled)

39. (Currently Amended)

A fastening system ~~for fastening at least a first and second panel together, said system~~ comprising:

at least one pair of oppositely disposed retaining profiles arranged at the edges of a ~~the~~ first panel, and at least one pair of oppositely disposed retaining profiles arranged at the edges of a ~~the~~ second panel, wherein mutually oppositely disposed retaining profiles on said first panel complement each other such that said second panel, having similar retaining profiles, can be fastened to said first panel;

said oppositely disposed retaining profiles having complementary hook elements that ~~can be hooked~~ hook one into the other, said complementary hook elements comprising:

a first hook projection connected to the first panel by a first leg on an upper portion of the edge of said first panel, said first hook projection having an inclined retaining surface, such that said first

hook projection is reduced from a free end of said first hook projection towards the first leg; and

a second hook projection connected to the second panel by a second leg on a lower portion of the edge of said second panel, said second hook projection having an inclined retaining surface, such that said second hook projection is reduced from a free end of said second hook projection towards the second leg, wherein

in an assembled condition the retaining surface of the first hook projection on said first panel bears against the inclined retaining surface of the second hook projection of the second panel to hold the first and second panels against each other so as to afford a gap-free floor surface; and

the first hook projection connected to the first panel by the first leg on the upper portion of the edge of the first panel bears against the second leg connected to the second panel at the lower portion of the second panel; and

a space is provided between the second hook projection connected to the second panel by the second leg on the lower portion of the edge of the second

panel and the first leg connected to the first panel at the upper portion of the first panel.

40. (Currently Amended)

The fastening system according to claim 39 wherein said first leg projecting approximately perpendicularly from the edge of the first panel, ~~and~~

said first hook projection faces towards the underside of the first panel, ~~and~~

said second leg projecting approximately perpendicularly from the opposite edge of the second panel, and

~~a~~ the second hook projection faces towards the top side of the second panel.

41. (Currently Amended)

The fastening system according to claim 39 wherein the inclined retaining surfaces of the hook projections engage each other such that the complementary hook projections ~~can be hooked~~ hook one into the other only by elastic deformation.

42. (Currently Amended)

The fastening system according to claim 41 wherein a clearance is provided between the end of the second hook projection at the lower portion of the second panel and the edge of the first panel and the end of the first hook projection at the under portion of the first panel ~~in the assembled condition~~ bears against the second panel at least in the region of the upper portion of the edge of the second panel.

43. (Currently Amended)

The fastening system according to claim 39 wherein intermediate spaces provided with clearance in the assembled condition of the two panels form adhesive pockets.

44. (Previously Presented)

The fastening system according to claim 39 wherein the panels substantially comprise an MDF, HDF, or chipboard material.